

RUGRATS

A Proposal For A Television Series

***Created by:
Klasky-Csupo, Inc.***

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RUGRATS

MEET TOMMY PICKLES. The son of STU and DIDI PICKLES, Tommy is your basic one-year-old. As it is with other toddlers, the world for him is a gigantic playground, one he doesn't understand, but loves to poke at.

Like other one-year-olds, he has a flair for drawing on walls with crayons. He loves to spit food all over the carpet and to push the buttons on his father's stereo until speakers and/or neighbors blow. He sees milk not so much a drink, but as a decorating material to apply to furniture fabric; and his favorite sound is the one glass and ceramics make as they hit the floor and shatter.

As with parents everywhere, Tommy's think of him as a cute but uncontrollable whirlwind. But to his fellow rugrats, Tommy Pickles is a hero. The toddlers in Tommy's neighborhood know that his behavior, though it seems like unintentional, blissful, childish recklessness to adults, is in fact often premeditated mischief. They know this because Tommy tells them so.

In Tommy's world, you see, one-year-olds can talk.

Either because they don't want to or because the adults aren't really paying attention, Tommy and his fellow toddlers speak only when no grown-ups are around. Their conversations have the tone of those older children would have, only their subject matter is of a more youthful nature: Colic and diaper rash, for example, are topics of major concern.

Besides its unique conversation, the world of Rugrats is a proportionally skewed one. From their vantage point—around a foot off the ground—things seem gigantic and far away. If there are several adults in a room, they may not be able to see beyond hips and legs. Kitchen counters are like mountain plateaus, light switches like Holy grails just out of reach. The park down the street might as well be in another state and the world that exists across the street seems behind the iron curtain.

As they wobble through life on legs not yet used to walking, and as they poke, and kick, push and pull at life around them, Tommy and his rugrat pals will show us the world that exists below our knees. It's a world where things or events that are mundane for grown ups turn out to be great, comic adventures.

THE FAMILY

STU PICKLES: An egghead who's always coming up with weird but ingenious inventions, Stu Pickles has never really grown up. A few years back, he founded Pickles Industries, a small toy manufacturing company, so that he could make money with his life-long hobby—playing with toys.

Although he loves his family dearly, Stu tends to get preoccupied with spur-of-the-moment ideas and inventions, and sometimes fails to pay much attention to the world around him.

In many ways, baby Tommy is like another toy to him. Stu often plays with his son single-mindedly for hours, only to get distracted by something, and forget the boy is in the room. When this happens, Tommy sneaks off to an area beyond the realm of adult supervision, and wreaks havoc.

DIDI PICKLES: Tommy's mother teaches 10th grade at the local high school, where she is very well liked by the kids. Because of her sunny disposition, 34-year-old Didi is among her students' favorite teachers. She's enthusiastic about most things, sometimes to a fault, and usually expresses that enthusiasm with great, gestures and uncontrolled, rapid-fire talking.

Didi is a very loving mother, and fawns over Tommy whenever she can. A firm believer in psychological therapy, she patiently employs the latest child-development techniques in dealing with her son. Tommy responds or ignores them as the mood strikes him.

Inevitably, Didi's attention gets drawn away by school preparations, by something Stu's involved with, or by just about anything happening in her day-to-day life. As these moments of distraction come quickly, Tommy is always ready. He can be sampling that bowl of food the dog seems to like so much before Didi even realizes he's left her side.

PETE: Like most family dogs, Pete is a big, friendly, loyal mutt. Stu and Didi consider him a dumb but pleasant member of the family, yet Pete is in fact more aware of Tommy than they are. But then, he has to be.

To Pete's chagrin, the toddler gets hours of pleasure tormenting him. Of course, Tommy doesn't see it that way. Pete's ears are just so interesting he can't resist pulling them, and the pooch's wagging tail, which seems to have a life of its own, just begs to be grabbed. And when Pete's not fending off the baby, he often finds himself rescuing Tommy from one or another imminent disaster. After all, no one else seems to notice them.

On the other hand, he and Tommy share an intrepid interest in, and curiosity about, the world around them. When he's not stoically suffering the baby's torment or rescuing him from impending doom, Pete often takes the baby on magnificent adventures through the neighborhood—adventures which Stu and Didi are never aware of.

OTHER CHARACTERS

PHIL AND LIL: 15-month-old twins who live next door to the Pickles. Although they're fraternal twins of the opposite sex, since they're infants, they look identical. People always mistake them for one another, which they find inexcusable and totally annoying (after all, what could be worse than being confused for someone of the opposite sex?).

Phil and Lil do everything together, including speaking (they often finish each other's sentences), and are never separated. They tend to act in harmony, except when they get into fights, during which they seem like one person fighting with himself. Although not the types to instigate mischief, they're always willing to participate.

CHUCKY: Tommy's 3-year-old best friend and side-kick, Chucky, lives with his family next door to the Pickles.

Not quite the fire-plug Tommy is, Chucky looks up to his younger-but-slicker pal. He's loyal to a fault and, like Pete, is often responsible for getting Tommy out of trouble (though sometimes he gets him into it, as well).

Since he's older, Chucky often acts as a bridge between the world of adults and the world of Rugrats. He's a translator of sorts, but has a bit of trouble with adult language because of a pre-school speech impediment.

STU PICKLES, SR.: A cantankerous mid-Western widower who lives with the family, Stu's father adores grandson Tommy. But unlike his son and daughter-in-law, Stu Sr. is not a man easily distracted, nor one to be toyed with. Despite his failing vision and hearing, Stu Sr. watches over Tommy like a hawk when the boy's parents are away.

Knowing that he can't get away with murder when Grandpa's on the prowl, Tommy respects, as well as loves, the old man. But figuring what Grandpa doesn't know won't hurt him, Tommy is not above cajoling the old man into a mesmerizing television marathon, sneaking out of the room during a particularly exciting moment of Jeopardy. Nor does he hesitate to hide the old man's hearing aid thus creating a momentary diversion and an escape.

At other times Grandpa loosens up and takes Tommy on adult-sanctioned adventures. Trips to the supermarket are among Tommy's favorites.

BORIS AND MINKA: Tommy's maternal grandparents from the old country, Boris and Minka live on the bottom floor of an old duplex not too far from the Pickles home. When the Pickles visit them, the two immediately start kissing the baby and lavishing him with undecipherable Eastern European terms of endearment. It's a wet, confusing affair that Tommy dreads.

Immediately afterward, Boris and Minka fall into arguing, sometimes in a language no one understands. When the argument's in English, Didi often joins in, leaving Tommy and Stu to suffer silently. But inevitably the arguments end, and everyone sits down to eat, acting as if they'd been quietly discussing the weather.

This, and the strange salted fish and other culinary oddities Boris devours like a bear going at trout, tend to cause Stu to lose his appetite. But then Minka takes his fasting as an insult, and Stu finds himself eating anyway.

Of course, none of this means anything to Tommy. He simply waits for the adults to get sufficiently distracted, then silently slips under the table. Usually he gets as far as the edge of the cloth before grandma, without breaking stride or even looking at him, grabs the child by his shirt and places him back in his seat. It's as if she has grandmotherly radar.

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